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BOOK REVIEWS

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS. By *Achille Loria*. Translated from the Italian by John Leslie Garner. London: George Allen & Co., 1911. Pp. 156.

This is a series of popular lectures on contemporary social problems from a somewhat narrowly economic point of view. Professor Loria, as is well known, is an advocate of the sociological theory known as "economic determinism." According to him, "the sociological cosmos rests upon the economic element." "Under the most diverse phenomena of contemporary social life," he says, "the profound, the essential cause is some economic fact." It is from this point of view that he approaches the social problems of the present. Everything from death and disease to contemporary politics and religion receives its economic interpretation. The problems which the criminologist is interested in are especially due to economic conditions, Professor Loria tells us, and their solution must be sought through the change of those economic conditions. He finds that prostitution, suicide and alcoholism are all due to economic causes. "Crime," he says, "in its manifold forms, is essentially the product of economic factors." It is especially systems of land ownership, which, according to Loria, determine economic production and distribution, and so all other social conditions. The disappearance of free land, with the inevitable poverty and misery, which he thinks has been occasioned thereby, has given rise to the various forms of individual and social maladjustment.

Such are Professor Loria's views. They seem so extreme as to be scarcely worthy of serious criticism. Lombroso's discussion of the causes of crime would serve as a good antidote for Loria's extreme view. While Lombroso finds the causes of crime to be fundamentally biological, he very sensibly admits the influence of economic factors, but says that the importance of these factors is often overestimated. It may be noted that Professor Ferri has attempted to reconcile Loria's economic determinism with Lombroso's biological theory of crime by claiming that past bad economic conditions are the causes of that biological degeneration which Lombroso has demonstrated to exist so largely in the criminal class. But it must be added, unfortunately for Ferri's reconciliation, that modern biology offers no support for such a view. A safe conclusion is, therefore, that any such one-sided explanation of crime as Loria's is essentially unscientific.

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REVIEW OF RECENT INVESTIGATIONS IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF TESTIMONY.

[In the issue of the *Psychological Bulletin* of September 15 is a review of investigations in the "Psychology of Testimony," by Prof. Guy M. Whipple, the results of which have appeared in the literature of psychology within the past year. The review is quoted here in its entirety, with the permission of the editor of the *Psychological Bulletin*.—Ed.]

Relatively only a small amount of experimentation has been conducted during the past year upon the psychology of testimony. Binet,² indeed, who deserves credit for initiating the work in this field, speaks as if the earlier investigators had garnered substantially all the really

²Binet, A. Le bilan de la psychologie en 1910. *Année psychol.*, 1911, 17, v-xi.